

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 5-8, 15, 16 and 19-22 were rejected, and claims 3, 4, and 17-18 were objected to. Claims 9-14 have been allowed. Claims 1-22 remain active in the application. In view of the following remarks, reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Specification Amendments

The abstract of the disclosure was objected to because of the length. Applicants have amended the abstract to present a single paragraph less than 150 words in length. Applicants have amended two further paragraphs of the specification to remove typographical errors detected during a review of the specification. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-8, and 15-22 were objected to because of informalities. The Examiner identified the word "and" in claim 8, line 5 as a possible typographical error, but claim 8 has no line 5. Applicant believes the Examiner may have intended to object to the word "and" in claim 1, line 5, since the same objection was made for similar language in claim 15, line 8.

Applicant respectfully submits that the word "and" is intended and proper in claim 1, line 5 and claim 15, line 8. For instance, claim 1 states that two things are determined from the results of the routing table lookup: a routing table identifier *and* a second processor responsible for processing the received packet. The "and" is necessary to indicate that both things are determined from the routing table lookup. This limitation is supported by the specification, e.g., the embodiment described at page 22, lines 1-19. This embodiment describes a distribution engine performing a table lookup, which returns a stream ID for a stream that flows to a desired line card, and a forwarding tag including a table entry index that the line card can associate with a table entry.

Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the claims be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 5-8, 15, 16, and 19-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by the Applicant Admitted Prior Art in Figure 2 (AAPA) of the instant application. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection as the AAPA fails to teach all elements of any rejected claim.

Reviewing Figure 2 and the accompanying textual description, the specification discloses that in the prior art design a single forwarding engine “must perform forwarding lookup and header manipulation for every packet processed by the access server.” (page 11, lines 6-8, emphasis added.) This prior art access server therefore teaches directly away from claim 1, which requires using a first processor to perform a routing table lookup and then passing the packet to a second processor responsible for processing the packet.

The rejection asserts that the network interface “inherently” includes a second processor responsible for processing the received packet. Whether the network interface could be construed to include a processor or not is immaterial, as the quote above defeats any claim to inherent packet processing in the network interface—the specification specifically teaches that in the prior art the forwarding engine processes the packet, not the network interface.

The rejection also fails to indicate any teaching that forwarding engine 58 determines a routing table identifier and passes the identifier to the network interface, as claimed. Although the Examiner asserts that this is “inherent,” inherency requires that the limitation be necessary, which it is not in this case. The prior art specifically teaches that the forwarding engine has already processed the packet and determined that the packet should be forwarded out network interface 60. Thus there is nothing remaining for network interface 60 to do but transmit the packet out egress port 62, and no reason for network interface to even receive forwarding information in an identifier.

Finally, the rejection asserts that it is inherent that the network interface in Figure 2 retrieves routing information from a table, using the identifier supplied by forwarding engine 58. Again, this goes against the specific teaching that all forwarding lookup and header manipulation are performed by forwarding engine 58 and not by network interface 60 in the prior art.

With regard to claim 15, the comments above apply equally to that claim. The rejection fails to provide any basis in the prior art for rejection of claims 2, 5-8, 15, 16, and 19-22. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully requests that the instant rejection be withdrawn and that all claims be allowed.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 9-14 are allowed. Claims 3, 4, 17, and 18 are objected to as being independent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In view of

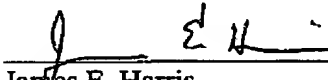
the remarks above regarding the patentability of claims 1 and 15 from which claims 3, 4, 17, and 18 depend, Applicants have elected not to rewrite claims 3, 4, 17, and 18 at this time.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-22 the application as amended is solicited. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

Respectfully submitted,

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